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BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD.

A week ago the Deseret News replied to some objections by an archdeacon of the Anglican church to the doctrine of preaching to the spirits in prison, mentioned by the Apostle Peter. (1 Pet. III, 18-20). We then demonstrated from the scriptures that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was and is to be preached to the dead as well as to the living. That is, to the spirits of the departed as well as to people in the flesh. Closely related to that doctrine is the subject of baptism for the dead. We, therefore, now meet some objections which have been raised by modern preachers against the evident meaning of the language of the Apostle Paul:

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? (1 Cor. xv, 29).

The objectors use this singular argument: "Paul spoke of those who practiced the rite, in the third person. What shall they do who are baptized for the dead? Not what shall we do?" The inference is then drawn that those who were baptized for the dead were "heretics." That is a most remarkable bit of reasoning. Let us take some similar references in the same chapter:

"Therefore whether it were I or they so we preached, and so ye believed, Verse 11."

"But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming." Verse 23.

"But some man will say how are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?" Verse 35.

"As is the earthly such are they also that are earthly; and as is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly." Verse 48.

Will anybody with ordinary sense claim that the use of the word "they," in these passages, excludes the Apostle and the faithful Saints to whom he was writing? If this view were to be taken, there would be a far worse muddle in the minds of sectarian theologians than prevails at present, and that would indeed be a monstrous calamity. But it is not to be supposed that everybody in the Church at Corinth or elsewhere attended to the rite spoken of by the inspired writer. He referred to those who did attend to it, and did not find fault with them. He was reasoning on the reality of the resurrection from the dead, in opposition to the notions entertained by some persons who had been led away by Greek philosophy. He denounced their heresy, and in doing so he cited a well known fact which he did not denounce or deprecate. It is clear from his language that baptism for the dead was practiced in the Church, and Paul referred to it simply as an argument in favor of the resurrection.

Objectors to the doctrine admit that there is evidence of the practice of the rite in the Church at a very early period. Perversions of the doctrine which occurred then and subsequently, form no argument against it. On the contrary, the counterforce is evidence in favor of the genuine. It is so with the perversion of the ordinance of baptism for the living. The many spurious forms bear witness in support of the fact that there is one true and valid ceremony.

It is further argued that "baptism is an act of voluntary obedience," and from that the conclusion is reached that "the vicarious administration is impossible." Again the reasoning is faulty. Apply it to the doctrine of vicarious atonement, on which vicarious baptism is founded, and see whether the argument will hold good. Christ died for sinners, "the just for the unjust." Their obedience or consent had nothing to do with the vicarious act. When they become obedient they will obtain its benefits. So with baptism for the dead. The vicarious act is performed by the living, and when those who are dead become obedient through faith and repentance, they will receive the benefits of the baptism performed in their behalf. Rejection of the doctrine of vicarious ordinances, involves rejection of the doctrine of vicarious atonement, on the validity of which depends the whole Christian religion.

But the glorious doctrine of baptism for the dead and the redemption of the dead who died without knowledge of Christ, has not been taken by the Latter-day Saints from a mere passage or two of ancient scripture. It has come to them by the revelations of God in the nineteenth century. Reference is made to the text in the Epistle to the Corinthians, simply to show that the rite was performed in the early Christian Church. The manner of its performance, the persons who may attend to it and those for whom it may be administered, cannot be learned from the dead letter of apostolic writings. Everything relating to it has been made known through modern revelation. There is not any doubt concerning it among those who have been enlightened by inspiration in the present times.

Proofs are not lacking of the acceptance of the ordinances performed in their behalf, by the spirits of the departed who have been ministered to behind the veil, and administered for by their relatives in the flesh. The glorious work in the holy Temples in be-

half of the dead is not in vain. There is joy in the spirit world. The prison doors have been opened. Hosts of captives have been set free. Not one vicarious act in their behalf will eventually be lost. The time will come when "every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ." They will believe, they will repent, they will become obedient, and the ordinance established by divine command for "every creature," having been attended to in their behalf because they could not perform them in person, they will come out of darkness into glorious light, and be numbered with the redeemed out of every nation, and kindred, and tribe and tongue, who will swell the ransomed throng and rejoice in the mansions of the Father, through the redemption wrought for them by the Beloved Son and the sons and daughters of God who followed Him as the Captain of Salvation.

The infidel assertion of modern preachers, that "there are only two sources from which information as to religion can be drawn, the fathers of the church and the scriptures," is characteristic of modern theology and theologians. The "fathers" are long since dead and gone, and many of them were in dense spiritual darkness. The scriptures, such as have been preserved, are so variously interpreted and distorted by uninspired ministers, that they form no definite guide to mortals. The idea that the Source of all inspiration and revelation is dried up, that the "Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor a shadow of turning," is so radically changed that he cannot or will not communicate with his children on earth, that they who ask will NOT receive, that they who seek will NOT find, that to them that knock the door will NOT be opened, is so irrational, unscriptural and obnoxious to the spirit of faith, that it could only be entertained by the "Blind leaders of the blind" and their deluded followers who are all in the ditch of confusion together.

That Christ preached to the spirits in prison, that the living Saints were baptized for the dead, that salvation will be offered to every soul either in the body or out of the body, and that not one shall be lost who can possibly be saved, and yet that "except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," and that these are among the doctrines of Christ which are essential to His religion, can be demonstrated from the fragments of inspired writ that have come down to us from the past. But the knowledge obtained concerning them and other glorious principles pertaining to the redemption of mankind, by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, has come through the manifestations of heavenly beings in this age and by the gift of the Holy Ghost to those who receive and obey the truth. Doubt concerning them has fled, and the spirit which guides into all truth unfolds them, until they are as clear to the spiritual vision as material objects are to the natural eye in the light of the sun at noonday.

JEW, CATHOLIC, PROTESTANT.

A short time ago a lecture was delivered by a New York author and publicist, Mr. David Lubin, on the three great branches of religious thought represented by Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. The lecture is reproduced in The Rochester Herald of the 15th of this month. It contains much that is worthy of thoughtful consideration, though at times the lecturer indulges in fanciful flight, not unlike that of the followers of the famous mystic, Swedenborg.

The lecturer suggests the unification of the three religious systems mentioned. As to how this can be done, he is, very naturally, silent. But speaking on the subject of unity, he makes this original and striking explanation:

"Let us for the time being set aside their respective doctrines and primarily take up the consideration of their names and what these names mean, and we find that 'Israel' means 'Champion of God,' 'Catholic' means 'Universal,' and 'Protestant' 'one who protests.' And now let us for the time being combine all these and we have 'The Universal Champion of God in constant protest,' protest against ignorance and wrong."

The inference drawn is, that an organization that would indeed be a champion of God, universal and protesting against wrong, would be the Church of God. There would be no objection, he thinks, to such an organization. It would maintain its place in the world as the greatest factor for good. But the three organizations have all lost that which their respective names stand for. He says:

"Are the people then opposed to them because the churches are the 'Universal Champions of God in constant protest against ignorance and wrong?'"

"I think not; I believe on the contrary, that the people object to the Jewish church because it is not in our day 'The Champion of God,' that they object to the Catholic church because it is not in our day 'Universal,' and that they object to the Protestant church because it does not in our day 'Protest against ignorance and wrong.'"

"The objection, therefore, springs from the fact that the churches assume names and titles to which they have no right when viewed by the claims which they severally and collectively perform. The Jew prays, but does not champion; the Catholic prays, but does not universalize; and the Protestant prays, but does not protest. The latter is here, but the spirit elsewhere; and so it is with the other two. They are led to become indifferent and in time to antagonize."

There is much truth in this. The very object for which the Church of God was founded upon earth, was that it should be universal and a champion of the right, protesting against all that is wrong. For that cause the Savior died, and the martyrs followed in His steps. When the Church left this mission unperformed, it became one with the world, an apostate church.

But how can a union, and return to first principles be effected? That is, after all, the important question. Certainly not by joining together the three branches, all of which, according to the lecturer, have failed in their missions. Three errors do not make one truth; three dead branches tied together do not form one live branch; three diseased organisms in one room do not make one strong and healthy organism.

The Lord, Himself, has provided in

the Gospel of His Son, given again to the world, the only true remedy against the condition that calls for a remedy. Let Jew, Catholic and Protestant unite in the Church. The Church is universal, embracing all truth in the heavens, on earth, and the depths below. It is the only true champion of God, and His authority among mankind. It is the constant protest against error and sin. In the Church the walls of prejudices that separate nations and races, rich and poor, men and women, are broken down. It is a new realm in which the Savior rules supreme, and all His redeemed followers are on a footing of equality. The Church is God's own fold, into which He will gather His scattered sheep, if they are but willing to listen to the voice of the Shepherd.

It is evident, the lecturer, with thousands of others, feels the lack of truth and sincerity in the "Christian" world. His lecture is one more testimony to the need of the establishment in this age, of the Church through divine power and revelation.

CHINESE MISSIONARIES.

Much has been said, pro and con, about the conduct of the missionaries in China, during the punitive expeditions that followed the rescue of the legations in Peking. Now, Minister Conger, the United States representative, comes out with a statement to the effect that the American missionaries, as far as he knows, did nothing for which they need to apologize. This exoneration is entitled to full credit, since Mr. Conger is well acquainted with all the circumstances.

The charge was that missionaries had organized looting expeditions, levying tribute on villages far in excess of actual damages sustained. To this Mr. Conger says that he advised them wherever they could, to make a settlement with the villages where murders had been committed and property destroyed, and that Li Hung Chang and Chang Yen Mao had given the same advice. The people were not compelled to pay anything, but their contributions were entirely voluntary. Only abandoned Boxer houses were taken possession of, to provide shelter and refuge for the native Christians.

Dr. Ament, of the American board of foreign missions, who has been severely criticized by Mark Twain, corroborates this statement. He says when the missionaries were notified to leave the legation, which had to be given up to the troops, the abandoned residence of a Boxer friend, Prince Hsi Ling, was occupied by them. There were some curios and clothing found upon the premises, and these were sold for \$2,500. Native Christians also brought in some goods that had been bought at a low figure, and this was sold at a profit to American and British officers. He admits that there may have been some looted articles among this goods, but that was unknown to the missionaries.

It is only fair that both sides be heard in this controversy. The American soldiers in China have been commended for their moderation and regard for civilized rules of warfare, although no doubt there were exceptional cases of pillage of which they were guilty. It would not be pleasant to find that American missionaries had stained the honor of the nation in the manner alleged by the critics.

The Chinese missions have passed through one of the most trying experiences in their existence. The plain duty of the missionaries, during all this time of trial, would have been to exert all their influence for peace, and the preservation of the Chinese empire, where they were sojourners and guests. That is what the Christians of Rome did, even when they were the subjects of the cruel Nero. If they have done their full duty in this respect, they need not apologize for their course. What has been their attitude in this respect? Have they, as the inspired Word teaches, urged submission to the authorities that be? That seems to us to be a more important question than any that can be raised as to their greed in securing indemnities.

Gen. Merriam favors a small army. Small favors thankfully received.

Chicago speculators find it impossible to tread on George H. Phillips' toes because of his corns.

Great Salt Lake may rise or Great Salt Lake may fall, but whichever it does it still remains, as a bathing resort, the salt of the earth.

If Gen. Bailloud and Col. Marchand really contemplate seizing the Dowager Empress of China, it might profit them to get first a few pointers from Gen. Funston.

Minister Conger says the missionaries in China have nothing to apologize for. Yet he does not deny that they had to defend themselves during the siege of the legations.

Chicago has discovered a new marine artist. The water he paints is said by one critic to be fairly alive. It must be Chicago river water, which is terribly alive.

Boxers near Pao Ting Fu have begun raiding again. It is reported, if this be so and they keep it up and massacre a few thousand native Christians they will very successfully inaugurate the partition of China.

In Washington it is believed that the Cubans will accept the terms of the Platt amendment. In the country at large there is a belief that in this matter the Cubans cannot help themselves.

President McKinley will be the second President to visit Kansas City, Mr. Cleveland having visited it during his first term. More Presidents, then, have visited Salt Lake City. But, then, just think how much more famous Salt Lake is than Kansas City.

Senator Hoar complains that men are sent to Congress from new states in the West who are undesirable and unfit. And there is an impression in the West that some of the old states of the East send men to Congress who are undesirable and unfit.

Mr. Chamberlain is said to be waiting patiently for the end of the war in South Africa. Mr. Chamberlain as "Patience sitting on a monument smile"

ing at grief" is quite interesting and not wholly unattractive.

The Filipino committee in Madrid resolving that their friends and brothers in the Philippines should continue the war against the Americans sounds very much like a huge joke. That committee is the Spanish counterpart of the famous Three Tailors of Tooley Street.

An Argentine army surgeon claims to have discovered a cure for consumption. It is to be hoped that he has, but when it is recalled how the great Kock claimed the same thing and how great was the failure of his claim, it is not surprising that eminent physicians in this country doubt the claims of their brother in Argentina.

Seven years is a long time to lie in duress, yet that is the length of time that James Gannon of Scranton, Pa., has been in jail for contempt of court in refusing to sign a deed. The old man (he is now sixty-eight) now has a chance to regain his freedom, not by purging himself of the contempt, but by complying with the terms of an act passed by the Pennsylvania legislature for his special benefit. This he refuses to do, declaring he would not raise a hand to regain his freedom. At first blush this looks like the result of the law's severity; in reality it is the result of the old man's obduracy. But no matter who or what is to blame it is a harsh and pitiable case. If there is no other way out of it Mr. Gannon should be forcibly ejected from that jail.

Probably the most virulently anti-American paper in the whole world is the London Saturday Review. It never lets an opportunity to make a fling and sneer at the United States pass, and it delights its soul to promulgate stories of rivalries and contentions between this country and some other. Its latest attempt in this direction is a very sensational article to the effect that the expansion of the German navy is more in preparation for a contest with the United States than with England. It isn't necessarily in preparation for a conflict with any particular country. Germany's naval policy is practically the common policy of all the great commercial nations. Then there are far too many Americans who are either naturalized Germans or their descendants, to permit the two countries to become embroiled over South America or anything else. Could it be, the Saturday Review would be a contriver of international contention.

ON RELIGIOUS TOPICS.

Northwestern Christian Advocate.

The first thing for a regenerated home-life is a conviction of the truth which the prophet saw when he said: "I and the children which the Lord hath given me are for signs and wonders in Israel." The family is a unit. A father does not stand alone; he cannot stand alone. Each may say, "I," but must add, "and the children." This is the law of the family and beware how you violate it. You dare not go here or there without saying, "and the children which the Lord hath given me." All your conduct must be governed with reference to the children. You work, if a parent, should be a family, not an individual matter. Any other course is contrary to the Christian ideal of the home.

Christian Standard.

Holy living is not something separated from daily life and the laws thereof. It is the most natural thing in the world, and the good Christian achieves perfection in the same way a good lawyer does—by study, consecration and practice. God has left us a text book in which the wisest and best men of the past have recorded what they learned and what was revealed to them as God's will. In this book we find directions to guide us in every emergency of life, but we must have the word in our hearts if we would use it. This book also reveals to us the life of our Savior as such love Him as naturally as we learn to sympathize with Keats when we read his short, sad life story.

New York Independent.

The love of show is only one root of all evil. It is a weakness of many wise men. University does love to pose in purple and fine satin as well as do the bishops of Fond du Lac. The University of Glasgow is to have an elaborate celebration next month, and Yale celebrates its bicentennial next fall, and we warrant that each will, in its own way, be as sartorially magnificent as were the Fond du Lacers. So give them rope; let them make all the show they will. Some people may thereby be attracted to the church, as they say that their diversity shows bring in gifts of money for education. The church—any church—ought to be wide enough for good-meaning men of all grades of intelligence. We have no sympathy with those who would discipline the seven western bishops. We may shoot our arrows of ridicule at folly as it flies, but to persecute it almost idealizes, sanctifies it. Let it alone, and let it handle its own rope.

Chicago Interior.

As was to be expected, and as we predicted years ago, Christian Science has undergone transformation, shedding its crudities and making constantly nearer approaches to intellectual respectability. The basis of all civic or social institutions is morality. Of morality religion is the only sure defence, and the Christian Sabbath is the true culture-ground or seed-garden of religion. True effect, civic stability, cannot be secured where little or no attention is paid to the conditioning cause, religion. And for the true culture of the religious nature a periodic intermitting of the rush and roar of human travel and traffic, as on Sundays, is absolutely essential. No man can be religious simply in a counting-room or simply in a church, but in both in their proper turn. The religious life for its proper development requires action, and also meditation; it must have its contact with men and with the Bible as well; it must strike out along the highways where humanity is thronging, and also, is in the sanctuary on the Sabbath, retire into its shrine and shut the door that there it may be alone with God. Strong protests should accordingly be uttered both in the pulpit and in the press, against all schemes which are proposed for the further secularization of the Sabbath.

New York Observer.

The public or organized encroachments on the Sabbath are becoming a most serious menace to American institutions. The basis of all civic or social institutions is morality. Of morality religion is the only sure defence, and the Christian Sabbath is the true culture-ground or seed-garden of religion. True effect, civic stability, cannot be secured where little or no attention is paid to the conditioning cause, religion. And for the true culture of the religious nature a periodic intermitting of the rush and roar of human travel and traffic, as on Sundays, is absolutely essential. No man can be religious simply in a counting-room or simply in a church, but in both in their proper turn. The religious life for its proper development requires action, and also meditation; it must have its contact with men and with the Bible as well; it must strike out along the highways where humanity is thronging, and also, is in the sanctuary on the Sabbath, retire into its shrine and shut the door that there it may be alone with God. Strong protests should accordingly be uttered both in the pulpit and in the press, against all schemes which are proposed for the further secularization of the Sabbath.

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

In the May number of Success, William Carlton Fox, of the Bureau of American republics, describes the path to liberty which Simon Bolivar blazed through the forests of South America in the early years of the last century. Henry Loomis Nelson begins a series of papers on "The Building of the American Nation." Mrs. Cornelia Cole Fairbanks, the newly chosen president general of the Daughters of the American Revolution, contributes a plea for the marking of neglected historic spots. A symposium along characteristic "Success" lines is one on "The Kind of Young Men Employers are Looking For," by Henry Clews, Daniel G. Reid, Cyrus Edson, William R. Stewart, Chauncey M. Depew, and others. Alfred Harmsworth writes his impressions of Andrew Carnegie's philanthropy, and Mrs. Burton Harrison is the chief fiction writer in this issue—University Building, New York.

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